

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

*Sub A1*

1. In a client processing system communicating with a modem over a communication link, the communication link including a telephone line connected to the client system, a method of responding to a disruption detected by the client processing system during communication with the modem, the method comprising:

terminating communication with the server in response to a disruption on the telephone line;

establishing an on-hook condition on the telephone line; and

waiting for a ring signal.

*Sub B2*

2. A method according to claim 1, wherein the disruption is caused by a Call Waiting signal.

3. A method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

if the ring signal is received within a first predetermined period of time, then:

waiting for an off-hook condition to occur on the telephone line within a second predetermined period of time following the ring signal; and

if the off-hook condition is not detected on the telephone line within the second predetermined period of time, then:

establishing the off-hook condition on the telephone line;

and

outputting an outgoing message onto the telephone line.

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1 4. A method according to claim 3, further comprising the steps of:  
2 recording an incoming message after outputting the outgoing message;  
3 re-establishing the on-hook condition after recording the incoming  
4 message; and  
a 5 re-establishing communication with the ~~server~~ <sup>second processing system</sup>

1 5. A method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:  
2 if a ring signal is received within a first predetermined period of time,  
3 then:  
4 waiting for an off-hook condition to occur on the telephone line  
5 within a second predetermined period of time following the ring signal;  
6 if the off-hook condition is detected within the second predetermined  
7 period of time, waiting for an on-hook condition to occur on the telephone  
8 line; and  
9 upon detecting the on-hook condition, re-establishing communication  
a 10 ~~with the server.~~ <sup>second Processing System</sup>

11 6. A method according to claim 1, further comprising the ~~step~~ <sup>steps</sup> of, if a ring  
12 signal has not been received after a first predetermined period of time,  
13  
a 14 waiting for an on-hook condition to occur on the telephone line; and  
15 upon detection of the on-hook condition, re-establishing  
a 16 communication with the ~~server.~~ <sup>second Processing system</sup>

1 7. In a client processing system communicating with a server over a  
2 communication link, the communication link including a telephone line, a  
3 method of managing a communications disruption during communication  
4 with the server, the method comprising:  
5       terminating communication with the server in response to the  
6 disruption;  
7       detecting an off-hook condition following the disruption;  
8       if the off-hook condition is detected following the disruption, waiting  
9 for an on-hook condition; and  
10       upon detecting the on-hook condition, re-establishing communication  
11 with the server.

1 8. In a client system coupled to a server system by a communication link, a  
2 method of establishing communication with the server, the client system  
3 including first transceiver means for communicating with the server and  
4 second transceiver means for communicating with the server, the method  
5 comprising the steps of:  
6       receiving a user input requesting initiation of communication between  
7 the client and the server; and  
8       in response to the user input, selecting either the first transceiver  
9 means or the second transceiver means for communicating with the server  
10 based on a cost criterion.

1 9. A method according to claim 8, wherein the cost criterion corresponds to a  
2 monetary rate associated with use of the first transceiver means to

3 communicate with the server relative to a monetary rate associated with use  
4 of the second transceiver means to communicate with the server.

1 10. A method according to claim 9, wherein the cost criterion is time-of-day.

1 11. A method according to claim 8, wherein the first transceiver means  
2 comprises a telephone modem and the second transceiver means comprises  
3 an Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) transceiver.

1 12. A method according to claim 8, wherein the first transceiver means  
2 comprises a telephone modem and the second transceiver means comprises a  
3 cable television modem.

1 13. A method according to claim 8, wherein the first transceiver means  
2 comprises a cable television modem and the second transceiver means  
3 comprises an Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) transceiver.

a 14. In a client processing system coupled to a <sup>Communication device</sup> modem by a communication  
a 2 link, a method of managing a disruption in communication with the <sup>Communication device</sup> modem,  
3 the method comprising:  
a 4 terminating the communication with the <sup>Communication device</sup> modem in response to the  
5 disruption;  
6 pausing for a predetermined period of time;  
7 after expiration of the predetermined period of time, determining  
8 whether the disruption is still present; and

a

9 automatically re-establishing communication with the <sup>communication device</sup>~~modem~~ if the  
10 disruption is no longer present.

1 15. A method according to claim 14, wherein the disruption is caused by a Call  
2 Waiting signal.

1 16. A method according to claim 14, wherein the communication link  
2 comprises a segment used by both the client processing system and a telephone  
3 system, the telephone system having an extension telephone coupled to the  
4 segment, wherein the disruption is caused by the extension being operated.

1 17. In a client-server processing system including a client processing system  
2 coupled to a first server processing system by a communication link, wherein  
3 a segment of the communication link is shared by the client processing system  
4 with a telephone system, such that an incoming telephone call by a calling  
5 party including Caller ID information is receivable by the client processing  
6 system, a method of providing an identity of the calling party to the user of the  
7 client processing system, the method comprising the steps of:

8 inputting the Caller ID information to the client processing system;  
9 accessing telephone directory information stored on a remote server  
10 processing system;

11 locating a telephone number in the telephone directory information  
12 corresponding to the Caller ID information;

13 locating a name in the telephone directory information corresponding  
14 to the telephone number; and

15 providing the name corresponding to the Caller ID information to the  
16 client processing system.

1 18. A method according to claim 17, wherein the telephone system has an  
2 extension telephone coupled to the segment, such that an incoming telephone  
3 call by a calling party including Caller ID information is receivable at the  
4 extension by a user of the client processing system,

1 19. In a client processing system coupled to a first server processing system by  
2 a communication link, wherein a segment of the communication link is  
3 shared by the client processing system and a telephone system, such that a  
4 telephone call including Caller ID information is receivable by the client  
5 processing system, the Caller ID information including a telephone number,  
6 the client processing system including a processor, a memory coupled to the  
7 processor, and a display device coupled to the processor, a method of  
8 responding to the incoming call, the method comprising the steps of:  
9 inputting the Caller ID information;  
10 determining whether the Caller ID information is stored in the  
11 memory;  
12 if the Caller ID information is stored in the memory, determining  
13 whether a name corresponding to the Caller ID information is stored in the  
14 memory; and  
15 if a name corresponding to the Caller ID information is stored in the  
16 memory, causing a message including the name to be displayed on the display  
17 device.

1 20. A method according to claim 19, further comprising the step of, if a name  
2 corresponding to the Caller ID information is not stored in the memory,  
3 transmitting a request to a second server processing system to provide the  
4 name corresponding to the Caller ID information, the request including the  
5 telephone number.

1 21. A method according to claim 20, further comprising the step of receiving  
2 the name corresponding to the Caller ID information from the second server  
3 processing system in response to the request.

1 22. A method according to claim 19, wherein the telephone call including  
2 Caller ID information is receivable by a user of the client processing system at  
3 an extension telephone.

1 23. A method according to claim 19, wherein the message includes an  
2 indication that an incoming telephone call is being received.

1 24. A method according to claim 19, wherein the client processing system is  
2 configured to allow the user to browse the World Wide Web.

1 25. A client system for communicating with a remote server system over a  
2 communication link, wherein a segment of the communication link is shared  
3 by the client system and a telephone system, the client system capable of

4 responding to user inputs received from a remote control device, the client  
5 system comprising:

6 a television set coupled to receive visual display information from the  
7 processor, the television set for displaying the visual display information to a  
8 user of the client system; and

9 a processor configured to cause the client system to allow the  
10 user to navigate through <sup>a graphical</sup> ~~an interactive~~ display environment displayed  
11 on the television set based on the user inputs received from the  
12 remote control device and information retrieved from the remote  
13 server system;

14 means for receiving the incoming telephone call;

15 means for recording the incoming telephone call; and

16 means for outputting a recording of the incoming telephone call  
17 to the user.

1 26. A client system according to claim 25, wherein the incoming call includes  
2 Caller ID information including a telephone number.

1 27. A client system according to claim 26, further comprising means for  
2 displaying a message on the television set indicating the presence of the  
3 incoming telephone call, the message including a name corresponding to the  
4 telephone number.

1 28. A client system according to claim 27, wherein the processor is further  
2 configured to cause the client system to:



3       input a caller identity specified by the user;  
4       compare the Caller ID information in the incoming telephone call to  
5 the caller identity specified by the user;  
6       if the Caller ID information in the incoming telephone call corresponds  
7 to the caller identity specified by the user, automatically transmit a  
8 predetermined electronic mail message to a predetermined logical address.

1 29. A client system according to claim 27, wherein the processor is further  
2 configured to cause the client system to:  
3       input a caller identity specified by the user;  
4       compare the Caller ID information in the incoming telephone call to  
5 the caller identity specified by the user;  
6       if the Caller ID information in the incoming telephone call corresponds  
7 to the caller identity specified by the user, automatically initiate an outgoing  
8 telephone call to a predetermined telephone number.

1 30. A client system according to claim 29, further comprising means for  
2 playing a recorded audio message to a receiving party in response to the  
3 outgoing telephone call being connected to the receiving party at the  
4 predetermined telephone number.

1 31. A client system according to claim 25, wherein an incoming telephone call  
2 is receivable at an extension telephone by a user of the client processing  
3 system.

1 32. A client system for communicating with a server system over a  
2 communication link, the client system comprising:

3 a processor;

4 a memory;

5 a housing containing the processor and the memory, the housing  
6 including an indicator for providing a visible indication to a user of the client  
7 system;

8 a display device separate from the housing, the display device providing  
9 a display to the user based on display information received from the processor;

10 means for determining when the user has unread electronic mail; and

11 means for activating the indicator when the user has unread electronic  
12 mail.

1 33. A client system according to claim 32, wherein electronic mail addressed to  
2 the user is received by the server, the client system further comprising means  
3 for contacting the server to determine whether the user has unread electronic  
4 mail stored in the server.

1 34. A client system according to claim 32, wherein the indicator is a light-  
2 emitting diode.

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